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Washington, June 5.—In the dreary weeks that the Western governments have been seeking with faint success to talk Russia into calling off the dogs in Laos, a young retired Army officer has come up with a startlingly simple plan of action which just might work. He wants to feed the Communists some of their own sneaky poison right at home.

Something of this sort underlies President Kennedy's fresh new interest in counter guerrilla warfare and the attendant sharp buildup of the Army's special forces. These units would be used in the developing nations to train local forces to combat Red guerrillas, to cope with subversion, sabotage and common murder.

Col. Donovan Yeuell Jr., retired, would go a long step further. He would seize the initiative, at least in counterinsurgency behind the Bamboo Curtain, and give the Communists so much to worry about inside their own lines they would have to ease the pressure on independents and retreats in Asia.

As a private citizen, Yeuell was invited to the seventh conference of the Asia People's Anti-Communist League in Manila last month. Asked to speak, Yeuell laid his proposal on the line.

"The strategies and tactics of 'containment' will not succeed against the cancer of Communism," he said. "The cancer must be destroyed."

That would be an affair general response to Khrushchev's "we will bury you" but Yeuell went on with his own plan.

"What the world needs as a matter of very high priority," he said, "is a new departure to carry unconventional warfare into the Communists' own backyard. I submit that the free countries should take it upon themselves to do two things simultaneously:

"1. Infiltrate Communist territory and conduct widespread harassing, sabotage operations against political and military apparatus."

"2. Organize Communist guerrilla forces and subversive operations by covert methods as well as overt."

Talking in military lingo, this means the killing off of the Communist in precisely the same ruthless manner the Reds are using to order an official reported three to 10 independent village leaders daily in South Viet Nam.

"All the existing free world pacts are for defensive purposes only," Yeuell said, "whereas the 'freedom guerrillas' would be primarily offensive. Furthermore, the less formal the effort, the less it will be inhibited by political constraints inherent in the present complex and confused state of free world formal relationships."

Yeuell Urges League To Take Leadership

Yeuell urged that the Western powers would have to assist with support and advice, that there must be some sort of central direction and urged the Asian Anti-Communist League to raise a voice in development of a "master plan."

Yeuell made it clear that he was speaking for himself. He looked at the record raised interesting possibilities.

Back in 1956 when Kennedy was setting his sights on the Democratic nomination, the wall Taylor was kicking up a fuss was in the Pentagon. Taylor, as chief of staff of the Army, was dissatisfied about the nation's grand strategy, or lack of it. He was then in the tub for a stronger Army and more attention to chances of all wars.



Donovan Yeuell Jr.
He has a plan

An early, fervent advocate was one of Taylor's deputies, Gen. James Gavin, then in charge of research and development. They had as most enthusiastic disciples a group of distinguished young Turks—combat-seasoned, dedicated colonels. Impatient and outspoken, they sparked what was known as the "revolt of the colonels." They got slapped down for talking too much, and their small research office was abolished.

Followed Taylor and Gavin Into Civvies

Donovan Yeuell was one of these young colonels. Like Gavin and Taylor, after failing to move many people about the dwindling strength of the Army, he turned to private business, convinced that he could better help national security out of uniform.

Today, Gavin is ambassador to France. Taylor has been recalled by Kennedy to shake up the country's intelligence operations. There are persistent reports that Taylor soon will have commanding transfer of trouble-making activities from the Central Intelligence Agency to a new division in the Pentagon.

It is obvious that the Yeuell proposals will not go without notice in high places. Equally obvious, if the suggested Pentagon branch for sneaky war is to get anywhere, it can receive little or no public attention.

There have been objections, and will be more. Yeuell remarked in his speech that counter guerrilla combat was merely a supplement, not a substitute, for much stronger conventional armed forces.

Against the Only Thing Untried

Such an effort as he recommended, he said, "may be one of the few choices left in our hands. Everything else has been tried, and has failed."

The business of sponsoring and aiding undercover warriors to promote subversion, sabotage and killing in Red-enslaved countries doesn't fit the accepted diplomatic pattern. It may be somewhat out of the historic mold of the vague "Rules of Land Warfare." But this course has bothered the Kremlin, and no doubt it would appear wholly acceptable to the G.I. who took a shell fragment in the stomach and now has a rest in Arlington immortalized as an Unknown Soldier.